

could not escape from the spell of the poet antiquity. There were, of course, narrow-minded fanatics in plenty who would cheerfully have burnt the contents of every pagan library and I imagined that they were offering an acceptable sacrifice, and there were doubtless many more *| without vindictiveness towards the classics, "I quite content with want of culture, deeming ignorance was more becoming to Christian piety (*Simplex sermo veritatis*.) The tendency of Christianity, as compared with paganism, was towards what we call the humanities and a little education, for the dominant feeling was that there was only one book in the world which really mattered, and that was the Bible. There was, it is I a slight literary renaissance starting at the close of the fourth century, with which we associate names of Ausonius, Paulinus of Nola, Prudentius and Claudian. This was mainly Christian. Ausonius strictly followed classical models; the graceful vigorous hymns of Prudentius were an original valuable contribution to literature; Claudian was neutral. "The last of the classics" as Mr. Maury has well said,* "he is, at the same time, the last and one of the most distinguished of the classicists. It might seem a mere chance whether his period belonged to the fourth or to the sixteenth century. This literary renaissance, however, was a last flourish and while we have to thank the Church for preserving the Latin tongue, we owe it little more than compared with the paganism it had overthrown-

* *History of Latin Literature*, Bk. III., c. 7.